

FINAL MINUTES
Special Meeting of the
TRINITY ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP
July 29, 2003
Victorian Inn - Weaverville, CA

Tuesday July 29, 2003
Meeting open to the public.

Members present:

Member	Representative Seat
Serge Birk	Central Valley Project Water Association
Jeffery Bryant	American Forest Resource Council
Tim Colvin	Trinity Lake Resort Owners Association
Edgar Duggan	Willow Creek Community Services District
James Feider	City of Redding Electric Utility Department
Patrick Frost	Trinity County Resource Conservation District
Zeke Grader	Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations
Dan Haycox	Miners Alliance
Dana Hord	Big Bar Community Development Group
William Huber	South Fork Trinity River CRMP
Kevin Lewis	American Whitewater
Tom Weseloh (alternate)	California Trout, Inc.
Richard Lorenz	Trinity County Resident
Charles Schultz	Bureau of Land Management
Elizabeth Soderstrom	Natural Heritage Institute
Jill Geist (alternate)	Humboldt County Board of Supervisors
James Spear	Natural Resource Conservation Service
David Steinhauser	Six Rivers Outfitter and Guide Association
Arnold Whitridge (Chair)	Safe Alternatives for Forest Environment

**Designated Federal
Representative**

Mary Ellen Mueller	USFWS California-Nevada Operations Office
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Members not in attendance: Zeke Grader, William Huber, and Jeff Bryant (actually were in attendance as noted by Jeff Phipps)

Welcome and introduction

Chairman Arnold Whitridge opened the meeting. The members introduced themselves. Two members, Elizabeth Soderstrom and Jim Feider, attended via phone conferencing. Mary Ellen Mueller, DFR was also in attendance.

Before the start of the regular agenda items, Jill Geist distributed copies of a letter from Humboldt County dated July 25, 2003. ([Attachment 1 – JULY 25 Humboldt County letter to Secretary of Interior](#)) This is a second of two letters addressed to the Interior Department Solicitor regarding Humboldt County's entitlement to releases of 50,000 acre-feet of water from Trinity Dam.

Public Comment

No public comment was offered.

Updated proposal for use of 50,000 acre-feet in late summer to prevent another adult salmonid die-off

Daryl Peterson of the Trinity Restoration Program, made a presentation on how an extra allotment of water could be used for downstream releases from Trinity Dam. Peterson also passed out handouts on his presentation ([Attachment 2 - Fall Action Plan](#)).

An additional 50,000 acre-feet of water has been made available from storage in the Trinity Reservoir Dam for downstream release. The extra water was made available by order of Judge Wanger following recommendations of the Department of Interior proposal dated March 18, 2003. The purpose of the available water is for use to help avoid another adult salmonid die-off similar to that which occurred during 2002.

The March proposal included a plan of how to decide whether to use the water and how the release would occur. However, it was decided that this plan could be revised and greater input from stakeholders could be sought. In June 26, an approach was put forth by the Trinity Management Council (TMC) to have the Trinity Management Working Group (TAMWG) work with the TMC to draft a new action plan. This action plan would then be forwarded to the Department of Interior and the Bureau of Reclamation for finalization and implementation.

On July 23-24, the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP) and TMC technical staff met to draft the new action plan that would then be forwarded on to the TAMWG and TMC. This technical group was unable to achieve complete consensus on a single action plan and therefore put forth two alternatives. These two alternatives were presented by Peterson. The intent was to have the TAMWG consider the two alternatives and then make their recommendation to the TMC.

Alternative 1 proposed to use two triggers that would need to be achieved before water would be released. These two triggers were 1) high run size of adult chinook returns to the Klamath River and 2) low water flow during the month of September at the mouth of the Klamath River. The predicted run size for the year had to exceed the average run size of 110,000 fish. The predicted flow had to be below 3000 cubic feet per second (cfs).

Both triggers were judged to be achieved already. The predicted run size for this year is 113,000 fish and the flow is predicted to range from 2265 cfs (90 % exceedance) to 3349 cfs (50 % exceedance). The average flow during September at the mouth of the Klamath during "below

average flow years” is about 2600 cfs. This year is considered to be a “below average flow year” and flow may also be expected to be near 2600 cfs.

Alternative 1 would release the water under two plans. The “proactive plan” would release 33,000 acre-feet between August 27 and September 15. The releases would be timed to follow immediately on the 3800 acre-feet of release planned for a Native American ceremony (White Deer Skin Boat Dance). The greatest releases would occur at first and releases would progressively decrease during the interval. The remaining 17,000 acre-feet would be held for an “emergency release.” An emergency would be declared if a disease outbreak among adult salmonids were identified through monitoring.

Alternative 2 proposed to use a different trigger than Alternative 1. It proposed to use flow releases from Iron Gate Dam. The trigger would be achieved if flow at Iron Gate falls below 979 cfs during August and falls below 1168 cfs during September. These flows are the currently scheduled flows planned for the respective months. The rationale for this alternative is its trigger is based on a greater certainty that low flows would be occurring in the Lower Klamath. If that were the case, it would be better to encourage the fish to move upriver. However, if the flows were actually near 2600 cfs, this may not necessarily imperil fish in the lower river. There was a concern raised that increased flow from the Trinity may pose an increased risk to Klamath fish. The Klamath fish may be encouraged to head upriver based on increased Trinity flows. Once past the mouth of the Trinity and its increased flows, the Klamath fish may encounter adverse conditions worse than those in the lower river.

David Steinhauser asked if earlier releases (i.e., August) would be worse for the upriver Klamath fish than September releases (i.e., after the Boat Dance). Peterson affirmed this.

Alternative 2 would follow the same release pattern as that in Alternative 1. A critical component was the option of the emergency releases based on monitoring for disease.

The TAMWG discussed the two alternatives to see which they supported and whether they could make a recommendation regarding these two alternatives to the TMC.

Elizabeth Soderstrom asked for some clarifications. Peterson noted that Alternative 1 would likely be best for Trinity fish, but Alternative 2 considered the unintended negative effects of higher flows on Klamath fish. Peterson also noted that it was thought that the Klamath fish would not stray into the Trinity.

More questions were asked about the rationale for flow schedules. Peterson responded that the TRRP staff examined the historic flow record for the Trinity. He noted that in 1912, the Trinity River at Lewiston showed a stormflow spike in mid September (e.g., about 1500 cfs increase above a 200-400 cfs baseflow). He thought that based on these data and other years, it was not unnatural to have spikes of flow during September. Peterson also noted that coded wire tag data showed that the peak of run Trinity chinook occurs in late August to mid September. Third, he noted that the Boat Dance flows start in late August and are 1650 cfs. The proactive release

would continue the Boat Dance release and slowly ramp down to 1000 cfs by September 15 to coincide with the expected peak of the run of Trinity fish.

A question was raised about what happens after September 15. Peterson responded that the flow would drop back to 450 cfs. Peterson explained that most spawning occurs after September 15. Lower flows during this time should help to insure that redds are not dewatered.

Responding to requests for clarifications on the proactive release versus the emergency release, Peterson explained that the proactive release would use 33,000 acre-feet and the emergency response would use any amount up to 50,000 acre-feet. Emergency would occur on top of the proactive release and could be initiated anytime. If it were not used, it would be left in reservoir storage.

Tom Weseloh noted that, since the Boat Dance was going to be released, this additional release shouldn't have a negative effect. He also noted that the 17,000 acre-feet reserved for emergency, if not used for emergency, could be used to help prevent redd dewatering.

Ed Duggan noted that his opinion was that the initiation of the fall run into Trinity system is enhanced by Boat Dance releases of water. He also raised some concerns for redd dewatering.

Tim Colvin asked whether the 50,000 acre-feet is certain for release. Peterson responded that it was not certain yet, but the plans are in place. The Bureau of Reclamation has the discretion to use it. The TRRP has made the recommendation on how to use it, but the Bureau will make the final decision.

Jill Geist asked whether the timing of the flows could still be shifted in case there is a dry fall. Peterson noted that the Boat Dance releases are set and that the TRRP did not want to have the "yo-yo effect" of high flows alternating with low flows. Peterson also noted that the emergency release would take 5-7 days to actually have its effect based on the time for monitoring, decision to act, and time for flows to arrive. Geist asked whether one could monitor the water column in order to predict an outbreak. Peterson response there was no known method to predict an outbreak.

Serge Birk asked whether more water than 17,000 acre-feet might be reserved for an emergency response.

Jeff Phipps asked whether lower flows over a longer period were considered for the proactive releases. Peterson replied that it was considered. Peterson noted that a longer release might let the fish "decide" when to migrate. However, such a release scenario might require a more rapid ramp down of release and the technical team wanted to avoid this. In addition, they didn't know what the elevated base flow should be.

Kevin Lewis asked whether there were barriers upstream of Weitchpec and that the disease-causing factors might be simply moved upstream. Peterson responded that no barriers were

thought to be upstream and that the conditions or occurrence of incidence of disease was thought to be less in the upstream reaches compared to the downstream reaches.

Other concerns were raised such as whether constraints should be place on the 50,000 acre-feet or whether it should be all placed in an emergency bank.

When Arnold Whitridge asked what the group seemed to be thinking. Jim Feider noted that he thought Alternative 2 seemed more in line with Judge Wanger's opinion. Elizabeth Soderstrom, Ed Duggan, and Tom Weseloh favored Alternative 1. Serge Birk asked whether there were still other alternatives to be considered by TAMWG.

Jack Ellwanger (citizen observer) noted that his opinion was that there will likely be another fish kill and that the water should be used to help prevent this. He wondered whether 50,000 acre-feet would be enough. .

Arnold Whitridge asked for a non-binding show of hands. Alternative 1 had 12 supporters; Jim Feider was inclined toward Alternative 2, but agreed to support Alternative 1.

Tom Stokely, Planner with Trinity County, responded to concerns raised about the effect of the release on water levels in Trinity Lake. Stokely referred to his calculations that showed 33,000 acre-feet would draw down the lake an additional 2.5 feet and that 50,000 acre-feet would draw down the lake an additional 3.9 feet. He noted that the forecast for flow into Trinity Lake were very favorable. He also noted that 450 cfs of baseflow in the Trinity River equals 27,000 acre-feet per month. He contrasted that with 124,000 to 184,000 acre-feet per month of out-of-basin export to the Central Valley. When it was asked whether export water could be used for the 50,000 acre-feet of release instead of storage, Stokely thought that Judge Wanger wouldn't likely agree.

There was further discussion by the group about whether they were prepared to support Alternative 1 as proposed or whether they would recommend that the TMC use some discretion to make some changes. The best use of the emergency 17,000 acre-feet was discussed but no clear resolution was defined. Also discussed was whether some flexibility might be used in the proactive release schedule and whether monitoring fish movement could provide better guidance as to how to best use the release water.

Motion was made by Tom Weseloh that the TAMWG recommend to the TMC that the TMC support Alternative 1 with proactive release schedule. And the TAMWG ask that the TMC exercise real-time fish monitoring to see if how the releases of the 50,000 acre-feet can be best managed to help fish (e.g., releases not be only limited to those of the proactive proposal).

Seconded by Richard Lorenz

Motion passed.

Motion was made by Tom Weseloh that the TAMWG draft a letter addressed to the TMC and CC'd to the Bureau of Reclamation. The letter would ask for the following:

- 1) the Fish and Wildlife Fish kill report be released to public,**
- 2) the Hardy Phase II be completed and released,**
- 3) that a generic statement be issued that an equitable balance be achieved in Klamath and Trinity releases intended to improve conditions in the lower Klamath, and**
- 4) a recommendation be made that the Bureau of Reclamation should exercise more coordination in the management of projects among its the offices (e.g., Klamath, Trinity, Rogue, CVP).**

Seconded by Jill Geist

Motion passed

Procedural issues and concerns

There was a concern about possible action on bylaws provisions and federal requirements regarding TAMWG communications, membership to the TRRP and TMC, and activities of TAMWG subgroups.

Motion was made by Jim Spear to postpone discussion of this item until next meeting.

Dana Hord seconded.

Motion passed.

Serge Birk suggested that this issue is important and everyone should study it before next meeting.

Arnold Whitridge adjourned the meeting.

Summary of all actions items and motions passed:

- 1) Motion was made by Tom Weseloh that the TAMWG recommend to the TMC that the TMC support Alternative 1 with proactive release schedule. And the TAMWG ask that the TMC exercise real-time fish monitoring to see if how the releases of the 50,000 acre-feet can be best managed to help fish (e.g., releases not be only limited to those of the proactive proposal).

Seconded by Richard Lorenz
Motion passed.

- 2) Motion was made by Tom Weseloh that the TAMWG draft a letter addressed to the TMC and CC'd to the Bureau of Reclamation. The letter would ask for the following:
 - a. the Fish and Wildlife Fish kill report be released to public,
 - b. the Hardy Phase II be completed and released,
 - c. that a generic statement be issued that the Klamath flows needs to be addressed in an equitable manner in order to the to address Trinity flows, and
 - d. a recommendation be made that the Bureau of Reclamation should exercise more coordination in the management of projects among its the offices (e.g., Klamath, Trinity, Rogue, CVP).

Seconded by Jill Geist
Motion passed

- 3) Motion was made by Jim Spear to postpone discussion of this item until next meeting.

Dana Hord seconded.
Motion passed.

Attachments:

Note: All attachments will be included in the final package of meeting materials as part of the public record, and will be available on the Arcata Fish and Wildlife Office website <http://Arcata.fws.gov>

[Attachment 1 – JULY 25 Humboldt County letter to Secretary of Interior](#)

[Attachment 2 - Fall Action Plan](#)